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Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: special economic assistance to individual countries or regions

Letter dated 8 October 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement on the Sudan by the Presidency of the European Union issued on 7 October 1998 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and of its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(Signed) Ernst **Sucharipa**
Permanent Representative
of Austria to the United Nations

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Annex

[Original: English and French]

Statement on the Sudan issued on 7 October 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union

The European Union is deeply concerned by the hostilities in southern Sudan, which are seriously undermining the international community's humanitarian efforts aimed at assisting the populations of the regions badly affected by famine.

The European Union strongly appeals to both parties to extend the ceasefire in Bahr el Ghazal beyond 15 October 1998 and to meet urgently, at a high level of representation, in the technical committee on humanitarian assistance, under the chairmanship of the United Nations, in order to consider appropriate ways to enable relief supplies to reach all areas in need.

The European Union and its States members, in their public opinion, will not understand and will find it unjustifiable if, after all the efforts deployed, the humanitarian crisis in Bahr el Ghazal worsens again, owing to the lack of willingness of the Government of the Sudan and the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) to agree on a timely extension of the ceasefire.

The European Union considers that the dramatic humanitarian situation prevailing in southern Sudan demands from the parties that they adopt a coherent and responsible attitude vis-à-vis the populations, and reaffirms its full support for the efforts of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to find a negotiated solution to the ongoing civil war, which is causing the suffering of the populations and the instability of the region. The parties are urged to agree to put an end to the hostilities and to accelerate the peace process within the IGAD peace initiative. The European Union also encourages the IGAD partner's forum to continue and reinforce its support to the IGAD peace process as the appropriate framework for the search for a political solution to this conflict, which has lasted more than 15 years.

The Central and Eastern European countries and Cyprus associated with the European Union and the European Free Trade Association countries, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.